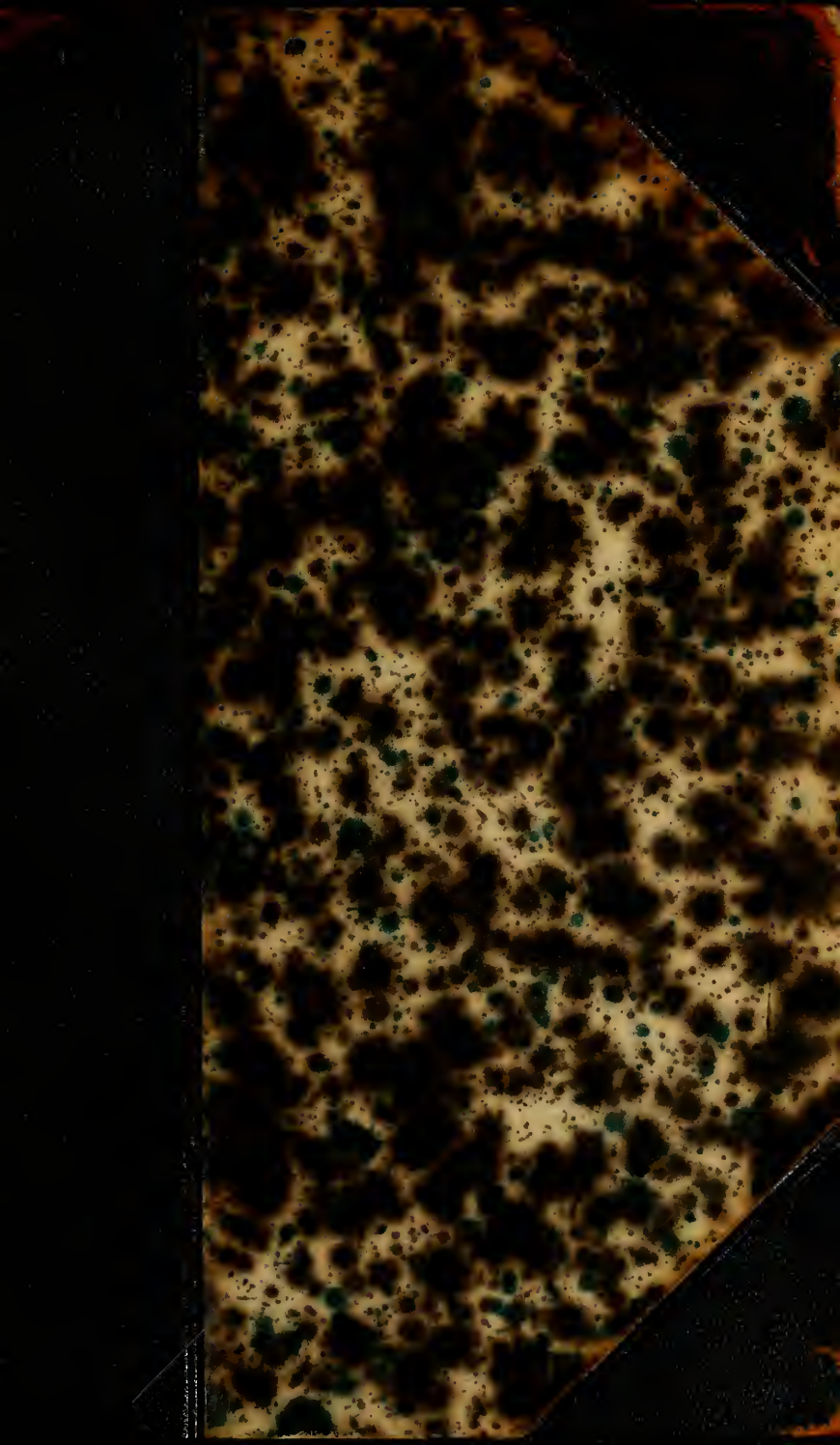

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THE
MARTYR PRESIDENT.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

THE

PRESERVER OF HIS COUNTRY,

BORN, FEBRUARY 12, 1809.

DIED,

A Martyr to Freedom,

APRIL 15, 1865.

Memoriâ in Æternâ.

THE MARTYR PRESIDENT.

NEW YORK:
Carleton, Publisher.
M DCCC LXV.

Drape the banner, toll the bell!
Gentle Chieftain, fare-thee-well.
Thine a Martyr blest to be,
In the hour of Victory.

Light the altar, hide the bier!
Ours to look with joy and fear,
Where the Country's FATHER *past,*
Its PRESERVER *meets at last.*

THE MARTYR PRESIDENT.

'Twas needed—the fall of our Highest and best—
To rouse to their duty the hearts of the rest;
And now, that the path of our duty is plain,
The soul of our Leader is with us again,—
To walk with the Nation, a glorified sire,
Through all her ordèal of tempest and fire;

To dwell in her councils, a wisdom refined
By death from the dross of mortality's kind;
To temper her justice, a memory bright
And tender with charity's loveliest light;
To soften her pulses when conquering war
Bids all the land's banners for Victory soar;

To fade to a holier presence, yet still
A presence remain, when 'tis justice to kill!
To point to the Lord our thanksgivings for
peace
When red-handed strife in the future shall
cease;
And beam from on high to our vision at last,
A beautiful star o'er the night of the past.

'Twas needed,—the name of a Martyr sublime,
To vindicate God in this terrible time;
'Twas fitting the thunder of Heaven should roll,
Ere cannon exultant had deafened the soul
To what in all ages the Maker hath taught,
The pardon of sin is with suffering bought;

'Twas fitting the lightning of Heaven should
fall
On him, the supreme and beloved of us all,
Ere, blest in his living to guide us and save,
Our honor forgot what was due to the slave.
For still with the South must we share in the
guilt
That stabs us at last to the murderous hilt;

And still to the loyal the horror belongs
Of aiding the chief of humanity's wrongs,
Till, fostered at length to its devilish prime,
The traitor sprang forth from its bosom of crime.
'Twas thine to Atone, when we fancied the end,
Our gentle First Citizen, Chieftain and Friend!

'Twas needed,—the loss of the Honest and
Just,
To humble our arrogant pride to the dust,
Ere, mad in the triumph and strength of our
youth,
We mocked the dead centuries' lesson of
truth:
What time is the national zenith of pow'r,
Most imminent perils encompass the hour,

And oh! if in blessings is Discord awoke,
What arm shall defend from Divinity's stroke!
Still reeking with patriot blood was the plain
Where treason's last legions had struggled in vain;
Still sounded each village its funeral bell
In woe, for our sons and our brothers who fell;

Still pled for the widow's and orphan's relief
An instinct fraternal, made sacred by grief,
When loud from the lips of a nation redeemed,
Harsh notes of discordance and enmity screamed!
God marked the ingratitude, pointed the dart,
And smote us to earth through our President's heart!

We bow to the blow, though it woundeth us
sore,
And still for our country God's mercies im-
plore;
The rod of correction our vanities need,
Our souls shall be strong, though our bosoms
may bleed.
But, oh! we are human; as men we must feel,
'Gainst reason's, religion's, or duty's appeal:

The heart at its latest, as earliest, breath,
Is young like a child to the wringing of death;
No argument priestly can soothe it to sleep,
The Christian's resigned, but the mortal must weep.
And long for thee, LINCOLN, a people shall mourn,
From glory, and honor, and victory torn;

Forever revere in thy character mild,
The lamb and the lion both led by the child;
Thy mem'ry enshrine with the Good and the
Great,
Who leave the world, dying, a lonely estate;
Thy name with the name of a Washington
take,
Who made them a nation, who died for its
sake.

We cannot recall thee ; too sure was the deed
That doomed thee for us and our children
to bleed ;
No more shall the hand ever ready to bless,
Be stretched to the humble to spare his
distress ;
No more shall the tongue ever kindly and
true,
Speak mercy to error, give merit its due ;

No more shall the eye ever bright with a
smile,
Bring light to the honest, confusion to guile;
No more shall we see thee erect at the helm,
When threatens the tempest our Ship to o'er-
whelm;
Yet all through thy history simple we trace,
The strength of thy manhood, the light of
thy face;

The touch of thy hand and thy wisdom are there,
An honesty open and pure as the air;
The spirit to rise from the fetters of things
And soar to a majesty higher than kings.
That majesty, LINCOLN, still lives for us all,
And reigneth immortal to honor thy fall.

While stands the Republic her children may
claim
A birthright for each in her loftiest fame;
Not lineage courtly, nor heritage vast,
Can raise to her offices names of the past;
Like prizes to quicken a nation of kings,
The doors of her honors wide open she
swings,

And each of her sons, by equality's light,
Sees stretching before him the path to the height
Where tow'rs the First Citizen's temple of state,
Approached by no passage of royalty's gate,
But free unto him who by genius the best
Shall prove himself worthy to govern the rest.

Full many have mounted from stations
obscure
To bid the Republic increase and endure;
Full many have added to history's page
The acts of the statesman, the thoughts of
the sage;
But LINCOLN, 'twas thine to make Holy the
place,
And give it thy blood for a suffering race.

How pure is the lustre of virtues that climb
Imperial summits of pow'r in their time,
Unaided by patronage, conquest, or birth,
But lifted aloft by the magic of worth:
Like jewels in primal reflection that shine,—
Not drawn from a casket, but raised from
the mine;

A growth from the sunless domain of the moles,
Yet born with a splendor of light in their souls!
Behold where the lowliest son of the West
Inherits such virtues to dwell in his breast:
He knows not his riches; he bendeth to toil,
Where scant is the harvest and stubborn the soil;

While broods in his bosom such patience
serene
As giveth to labor its tenderest mien.
None tell to the liegeless of houses and lands
The fate of a nation shall rest in his hands;
Yet sleeps there a might in the calm of his eye
To rescue a nation from peril—and die!

Oh, bitterest lot that the lowly can find,
Where labor's monotony crushes the mind,
Till poverty, prison'd in poverty still,
To dust is degraded, or madden'd to kill.
'Tis thus in the countries far over the sea;
But happy, my Country, the poor man with
thee;

For wide over thee may his industry range,
And sweeten his toil with the blessings of change.
From tracing the furrow and planting the grain,
The youth turneth back and forsaketh the plain;
He mates with the boatmen, and joins in their song,
Where rolleth the Father of Waters along;

Still patient with fortune, still earnest to bear
What God and humanity mark for his share.
None read from the future his glorious fate
To stand at the helm of the vessel of State,
Its stay till the night and the tempest are done,
And then, into Heaven go up with the sun!

How strong is the Manhood that beareth
the test
When Duty and Impulse make war in the
breast;
How bitterly struggles the nature humane
With something that's higher than heart in
the brain;
A god with our fallen mortality strives,
And Manhood is lost if the fonder survives.

'Tis Duty that calleth the sturdy to go
Where lurks in his forest the Indian foe;
The gentle of heart and the merciful man
Is called by his country to march in the van;
He goes, and his rifle is heard in the wood;
His duty is done, but he sickens of blood.

Time only, that Spirit of kindness could face
With savages, worse than the Indian race,
To mock at the tenderness ever its own,
And pleading for them at the steps of the
throne;
For loving indulgence a martyrdom give,
And murder sweet Mercy, that Justice might
live!

Well tried is the genius that rises to rule
From lessons of man in adversity's school:
Ill-balanced by honors too lavishly flung,
It scorneth the level from which it is sprung;
Embitter'd by contest with rank as it rose,
Its logic is iron that hardens with blows;

Or, true to the balance, in victory mild,
It tow'rs like a mountain grown up from
the wild;
Still firm at its base in the primitive plain,
To shrink to a summit more humble than
vain.
So, he of the West, from obscurity's vale,
Goes up to a height in political tale;

So, true to the lowly, refined with the high,
To these he lends counsel, with those in his eye.
"Half free and half slave the Republic must fall;
Yet saved it will be," are his words for us all!
Time put him to proof when the issue was tried,
He lived for the Deed, for the Principle died!

Now, borne on his countrymen's louder
acclaim,
He mounts to the station most noble of fame;
A chief in the halls where a Washington trod,
And like unto him as a saint to a god.
Foul Treason has risen, its horrors flame
forth
To rouse from their slumbers the souls of
the North,

And pealeth from cities, from prairies and farms,
The rallying cry of the loyal in arms.
War breaks on the nation, she enters the strife
And struggles with traitors for Honor and Life!
Where dwelleth the spirit her being to save
From murderers bred in the toil of the slave?

The Capitol answers: the spirit is there,
And holdeth its court in the President's chair.
That nature so gentle containeth a will
Which glows like a fire in an air that is still.
Alas! that our pillar of guidance by night
Should fade from the world at the coming of light.

Why follow the record? His glories are told
In all that his people the tenderest hold:
A nation redeem'd, and its Banner unfurl'd,
The fairest, the strongest, the best in the world;
Henceforth be that Banner to patriot eyes
A pray'r from its Shepherd of Stars in the skies;

Henceforth be its meaning for ages to scan,
That Heaven lies bleeding upon it for man!
How wise was the leader; how gentle the
sage;
How calm with the hasty, indulgent to rage;
All fervent of purpose to follow the right,
And merciful still in the midst of the fight;

To calumny silent; to enmity mild;
In action a giant, in faith like a child;
Four millions of bondmen he called to be
free;
And saved thee, my Country, and perished
for thee!

Bright Honor, the plume of the lily
Let Woe from thy morion take;
And weep at the direful disaster,
And kneel at the tomb of our Master,
Who laid down his life for thy sake.

Fond Mercy, thy shield for the praying
Let Pity's last injury break;
And mourn over all that was mortal
Of him of thine innermost portal,
Who laid down his life for thy sake.

Great Freedom, thy soul of the dauntless,
Let sorrow invincible shake;
And blot with a tear in thy charter,
The name of the patriot Martyr
Who laid down his life for thy sake.

R. H. NEWELL.

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